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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Letter dated 7 September 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to write to you in my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group at the United Nations and to convey to you the final communiqué and recommendations adopted by the Al-Quds Committee at its eighteenth session, held at Agadir, Kingdom of Morocco, on 28 August 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 40 and 41, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Hasmy **Agam**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
and Chairman of the Islamic Group

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Annex to the letter dated 7 September 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic, English and French]

Final communiqué and recommendations adopted by the Al-Quds Committee at its eighteenth session

AGADIR, KINGDOM OF MOROCCO
27 JUMADA-I, 1421H
(28 AUGUST 2000)

In response to a gracious invitation from His Majesty King Mohamed VI, Sovereign of the Kingdom of Morocco, and Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, the latter held its Eighteenth Session in the City of Agadir, in the Kingdom of Morocco on 27 Jumada I, 1421H (28 August 2000) to examine the critical juncture faced by the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, the foremost cause of the Islamic Ummah, in the wake of the latest developments.

2. The Meeting was attended by H.E. President Yasser Arafat, President of the State of Palestine and Their Highnesses and Excellencies the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and delegations of the Committee's member states, as well as H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It was also attended by a delegation from Al-Quds Al-Sharif representing Christian religious figures from all churches, as well as Muslim ulemas.

3. His Majesty King Mohamed VI, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, opened the Committee's proceedings with an address whereby he affirmed that the juncture under which the Committee is convening is most critical and calls for utmost interest, sagacity and farsightedness.

His Majesty also pointed out the successful steps achieved by Al-Quds Committee since its establishment under the chairmanship of the late King His Majesty Hassan II, may God rest his soul, with a view to safeguarding the Holy City and preserving its religious, cultural and historical identity as a meeting point for religions and a symbol of tolerance and coexistence. His Majesty also affirmed the need to defend the legitimate rights of the Islamic Ummah at large and the Palestinian people in particular.

After having referred to the difficult negotiations conducted recently in Camp David with regard to the final status, while hailing the peaceful efforts made in this respect, His Majesty delivered a call on behalf of all present generations to all those interested in peace, in which he affirmed that these generations aspire with great expectation to the establishment of an all-embracing peace in the entire region such as to signal the advent of a new era based on coexistence, concord, trust and joint action for the purpose of bringing about a new reality that allows the next generations to live in stability, security and prosperity.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI concluded his opening address by underlining that this aspiration requires farsightedness and demands political courage while it imposes a tremendous collective responsibility on all to shoulder.

4. H.E. President Yasser Arafat, President of the State of Palestine delivered a statement in which he thanked His Majesty King Mohamed VI for inviting the Al-Quds Committee to hold its Eighteenth Session at this crucial juncture for the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif. He pointed out that Al-Quds is currently under threat and that the situation no longer permits any waiting or hesitation.

He further stressed that the partners shall not let down Al-Quds and shall not leave it to the very fate that Israel is trying to impose on the Holy City, adding that the situation warrants the rallying and mobilization of all means and potentialities in order to provide for the defence of the Holy City and to rid it from occupation as well as to come out with a strong, unified Arab-Islamic position telling the world at large that Al-Quds Al-Sharif, occupied in 1967, is the eternal capital of the independent State of Palestine. It is a red line, he said, which allows no hesitation. Any solution which is not based on the resolutions of international legitimacy is doomed to fail. There shall be no security, peace or stability in the Middle East region without the return of Al-Quds Al-Sharif to its legitimate owners.

5. Statements by the heads of delegations focused on the longstanding positions adopted by the OIC Summit and Foreign Ministers Conferences, as well as the relevant resolutions adopted by the Al-Quds Committee at its previous sessions. They commended the efforts made by the Al-Quds Committee under the chairmanship of the late King His Majesty Hassan II, as well as those being made by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, for the preservation of the Arab-Islamic character of the city and its cultural, civilizational and historical landmarks.

6. In light of the deliberations conducted by its members, the Committee reached the following decisions:

(a) The Committee affirms that the establishment of an equitable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East has been and shall continue to be one of the OIC member states steadfast major objectives, a peace based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and particularly Security Council resolution 242 and 338 as well as the land for peace principle. The Committee further calls for the need to pursue negotiations to ensure continuation of the peace process on this basis.

(b) The Committee supports the efforts made in earnest to establish an equitable comprehensive peace and to ensure the return of the entirety of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of June 4th, and hails Lebanon's victory through the liberation of its occupied southern area.

(c) The Committee supports the stand of the State of Palestine firmly adhering to its sovereignty over Al-Quds Al-Sharif, including the Holy Mosque of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and all the Holy Christian and Islamic sanctuaries which constitute an integral part of the Palestinian territories

occupied since 1967, and further affirms that Al-Quds Al-Sharif is the capital of the independent State of Palestine. In this connection, the Committee reaffirms its rejection of any attempt to diminish the Palestinian sovereignty over Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

(d) The Committee reiterates the need for action to put an end to all Israeli practices and measures which conflict with the resolutions of international legitimacy and run counter to the agreements signed by the Palestinian and the Israeli parties. The Committee calls upon the Security Council to prevent these measures in accordance with Security Council Resolution 465 and to reactivate the Supervision and Monitoring International Committee for the purpose of preventing settlement moves in Al-Quds and in the occupied Arab territories, in conformity with Resolution 446 of the Security Council.

(e) The Committee requests all States to uphold Security Council Resolution No. 478 (1980) calling upon them not to transfer their diplomatic missions to the City of Al-Quds; it further invites them not to admit the Israeli attempt to impose the fait accompli in the City of Al-Quds. In this connection, the Committee rejects the recommendation issued by the American House of Representatives providing for the transfer of the American Embassy to the City of Al-Quds and appeals to the American Administration not to carry through this recommendation which is contrary to the resolutions of international legitimacy.

(f) The Committee calls on the States of the World to recognize the State of Palestine with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital as soon as the Palestinian State is proclaimed on the Palestinian soil, and to provide all forms of assistance to the independent Palestinian State so that it may extend its full sovereignty over the Palestinian territories in accordance with the international legitimacy; it further appeals to the States of the world to back up the State of Palestine in acceding to full UN membership.

(g) It pointed out the need to implement General Assembly Resolution 194 concerning the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homes and property as a fundamental component of a comprehensive and just peace.

(h) The Committee welcomes the framework agreement concluded between the PLO and the Vatican on 15 February 2000 whereby all unilateral decisions or acts such as any alteration of the distinctive character and legal status of Al-Quds, are rejected both morally and legally. The Committee reaffirms the need for joint Islamic-Christian action to safeguard the City of Al-Quds with its religious, historical, civilizational and cultural character.

(i) The Committee hails the efforts made by His Majesty the late King Hassan II in establishing the Beit Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency and

entrusting it with the objectives of protecting the Holy City and its Palestinian population. It also expresses its appreciation to his successor His Majesty King Mohammed VI who has surrounded it with his care and solicitude and who has generously provided it with the means to energize its activity under optimal conditions.

(j) The Committee extends its appreciation to the Al-Quds Committee Member States which promptly provided donations to the Agency, thus enabling it to initiate implementation of its projects in the areas of housing, restoration and educaton. The Committee calls on the OIC Member States to support the Agency and to facilitate its mission in mobilizing resources and financial means for the implementation of its projects in Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

(k) The Committee appeals to the public and private financial institutions, funds, banks, business people and individuals, to fulfil their duty in supporting the Agency's activities.

(l) The Committee notes with satisfaction the successful launching of the Agency's activity and encourages the Agency to pursue its determined action for the development and implementation of its projects in the Holy City.

(m) The Committee expresses its deep appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to its Chairman, His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Sovereign of the Kingdom of Morocco, for the efforts he has continuously exerted at all Arab, Islamic and international levels in support of the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as well as for his gracious invitation to hold this important session in the city of Agadir.

(n) The Committee also expresses its warm thanks and deep appreciation to the Government of His Majesty and to the brotherly Moroccan people for the warm welcome, and generous hospitality extended to the delegations participating in this session.